



GESTALT PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING INSTITUTE MALTA

**GPTIM**

## **Clinical Competency**

### **Case Study Guidelines**

Exam preparation forms part of the final specialist module focusing on the role of the student as a Therapist. The Case Study is an integral part of the final exam. Students are to fulfill 10 supervision hours with the Case Study Supervisor. The aim of these supervision sessions is for the student to feel supported to discuss the choice of the case study client, to ask about any supervision issues that might be encountered, and to be guided in writing each chapter of the Case study. Each chapter needs to be submitted a week before the following session, and feedback will be given on each chapter. The case study must be polished with suggestions included for final submission.

The purpose of the case study is to provide the trainee with an opportunity to demonstrate their clinical competence and readiness for the exam, which leads to a Master's degree awarded by GPTIM.

### **Clinical Case Study**

Trainees will submit a clinical case study (13,000 to 16,000) words.

The chosen client will be taken from the trainee's main field of clinical practice. The requirement is that the student therapist would have met the client for at least 16 sessions. The student will need to show competent translation into practice of concepts, methods, and theory. It is particularly important for the student to demonstrate the role of a psychotherapist and not focus only on the client during the course of therapy. The student must show the nature of the relationship between her/his process and the client's process. The student's process has to be continuously visible together with the therapeutic relationship.

The case study should be typed, double spaced on one side of the paper only. Authors from whom the concepts are referenced should be included in the Reference section in alphabetical order at the end of the case study. Please follow the APA system of referencing.

The following are standard guidelines for the presentation of a case study used extensively across different approaches.

## **Extended Abstract**

Abstract should be between 1000 words to a maximum of 2500 words.

It should include in a brief:

- an introduction to the case study and to the client
- a birds-eye view of each of the 4 chapters
- a conclusion

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

This should be an overview to help the assessor become familiar with the client and the student therapists' initial process. It should be comprehensive-

- **Brief description of client:**
  - sex, age, marital status, members of the family at present, social relationships at present, job status.
  - family of origin history
  - source of referral.
  - other therapy, medical/therapeutic history.
- **Presenting problems/situation/purpose of therapy: why s/he came, expectations realistic or otherwise.**
- **Initial contracts or agreements established**
- **First impressions**
  - general appearance
  - physical stature and posture
  - mannerisms
  - movement
  - self/environmental support
  - quality of contact
  - other

- **Therapist's initial reaction to the client**
  - likes/dislikes/curiosity...
  - early 'hunches'
  - who might I represent to the client?
  - what immediate pitfalls might present in the parallel process?

## **Chapter 2**

### **Diagnosis**

- Diagnosis will include an assessment of the clients' way of being in the world. This includes analysis of the client's contact functions, the way in which disturbances at the contact boundary involve past configurations of the field and how these re-present in the 'here and now thorough modifications to contact. Reference should be made to attachment patterns, developmental deficits and gestalt perspectives on transference phenomena, the self, contact cycle etc., please refer to the 'Gestalt Assessment' points which have been covered throughout the course and which have to be the focus of the Case Study diagnosis and work with the client.
- Reference must also be made to current psychiatric diagnosis, DSM V, in so much as this is the common diagnostic language with which we communicate with other professionals. However, the students' area of expertise is Gestalt Diagnoses, and the elaboration needs to be focused on Gestalt Assessment as well.
- The student is reminded to include her/his own process.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Overview of the therapeutic journey**

The case study should provide a summary record of the beginning, middle, and end of the course of therapy.

- The significant aspects of the client's history, and how this relates to the issues presented and worked through.
  - Discernible phases in the course of therapy.
  - Working through the child development issues in the therapeutic encounter.
  - Major shifts in experience and behavior observed/reported during therapy.
  - Evolution of a person's life during the therapy period.
  - 'External' or manifest changes in job, family, relationships, domestic situation, etc.
  - Shifts in personal appearance/physical mobility/ posture self-presentation.
  - Client's report of how s/he has evolved.
  - The 'state of play' at the end of therapy or at the time of writing, whichever is earlier.
  - Likely future developments/continued work.

### **Detailed description of selected key episodes**

- Describe at least one turning point or key episode/encounter in the therapeutic work.
- Interaction with a therapist and the kind and quality of contact; transference/countertransference issues.
- Repetition compulsion/fixated gestalt/script system/re-working of developmental stages.
- 'Resistances' and how they are worked with.
- Gestalt theory as it relates to the observation of and work with client.
- Theme and experiments created and observed.
- The balance of support and challenge offered by the therapist and the level and the kind of client's self-support.
- Observed capacity for organismic self-regulation

### **Chapter 4**

#### **Conclusion**

##### **Personal experiences of Therapist**

- Including issues relating to the therapist's own unfinished business and countertransference.
- Mistakes/realizations/what I would have done had there been a rewind button.
- Particular rewards, sources of satisfaction, "what I'm proud of."  
"What I did not regret."
- What have you learned about your style of being a therapist?
- If the therapeutic relationship is still in process, how you intend to proceed.
- Acknowledge the client for the therapeutic experience.

#### **Acknowledgements**

#### **Index**

#### **Referencing**

*With the submission of the case study, the student has to submit a letter stating that she/he have erased all model case studies given electronically at the beginning of the case study supervision.*